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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

February 17, 1964

TASK FORCE ON UNIFORM STATE/AID/USIA REGULATIONSProgress Report - January 1, 1963 to February 14, 1964A. Introduction

During the first eight months of the period covered by this report, despite many problems and obstacles, important progress was made in drafting uniform regulations, resolving conflicts and creating better understanding of the program. With the increased support from higher levels within the agencies, the pace of work during the last five and one-half months was greatly accelerated. Many important uniform regulations have now been issued, most work in progress has been brought to final stages, and new areas of work have been undertaken.

The first Task Force Report, dated January 22, 1963, stated: "It has become clear that achievement of a substantial degree of uniformity in the regulations and procedures of the three agencies is a realistic and possible objective." During the last several months, this objective has become a reality in many regulations.

There is attached a list of uniform regulations completed (Tab A) and a report of work in progress (Tab B).

B. Accomplishments

1. Work Completed. Priority has been given to regulations affecting personal entitlements and related administrative regulations and procedures. Work has been completed in many of these areas including Leasing, Repair, and Operation of Buildings, Provision of Furniture and Equipment, Use of Motor Vehicles, Premium Compensation, and Local Employee Administration. These and the other regulations listed in Tab A are quite voluminous and contain numerous and varied provisions. It was necessary not only to resolve many issues but also to draft the new regulations with care to meet the needs of the three agencies and to be understood easily by personnel with differing backgrounds and experience. In general, we believe that the quality of the regulations of all three agencies has been improved by joint effort. While there is a need to compromise and sometimes include specific provisions for one of the agencies, by working together we obtain the benefit of broader thinking and experience. Every section is subjected to critical examination and there is less chance of carrying forward outdated or poorly worded provisions.

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2. Work in Process. Uniform regulations are nearing completion in Grievances; Conduct of American Employees; Disciplinary Actions; Control, Maintenance and Disposal of Government Personal Property; and various regulations concerned with personal services and benefits. Target dates will be established for work in progress but these may be delayed because of unforeseen issues that frequently arise in obtaining final review and agency approval. The uniform instruction on Rest and Recuperation Travel is being codified into the Manual and many provisions are being revised in light of experience. The Uniform State/USIA Foreign Service Travel regulations are being revised to include AID. Progress is encouraging and it is expected that joint travel regulations can be issued in the next several weeks.

3. Education. There continues to be an increasing awareness of the need for uniformity and a growing understanding of how to achieve it. The success of this educational effort is indicated by the list of Uniform Foreign Affairs Manual Circulars (FAMCs) issued. (Tab A) In most cases, the development of uniform instructions was undertaken at the initiative of the drafting office and minimum participation by the Task Force was necessary. More and more, inter-agency consultation at the operating levels has become the accepted practice when considering changes in regulations. However, there still remains a need to encourage and broaden this activity.

4. Establishment of the Mechanism for Developing Uniformity. One of the major concerns of the Task Force, in the previous period, was the development of the relations and mechanisms of achieving uniformity. The results of this effort were published jointly as FAMC 163A "Policies and Procedures for Establishing Uniform Regulations", dated January 6, 1964. As we gain further experience and tackle new areas, these policies and procedures will be further redefined.

FAMC 163 was issued jointly as a companion piece to encourage the Ambassador to develop and issue local rules and practices to carry out the uniformity program. While we can develop uniformity in regulations issued here so that they no longer present obstacles to uniformity, the success of the program stands or falls on the extent of uniform application in the field.

As a result of the meeting of the Board of the Foreign Service on November 21, 1963, formal liaison arrangements were established with the Department of Defense and arrangements were made for consultation with other agencies. It is recognized that identical State/AID/USIA regulations cannot be used by Defense and some of the other agencies; rather, we are seeking agreement on important matters of policy and greater uniformity of personal entitlements.

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C. Problems

1. General. In general, the problems which the Task Force now encounters are those inherent in the undertaking itself. There are great differences in administrative arrangements and philosophy. Some of these result from basic program differences; some are mainly historical. The needs of the agencies for revised regulations vary. The organization of the regulatory material varies and problems continue to arise from the Department's program for separating regulations from procedures. However, the biggest problem is the vast amount of work involved in achieving uniformity. Even the most restricted and non-controversial segments require much time and effort; the work that has gone into areas such as Local Employees Personnel Administration, Attendance and Leave, Premium Compensation and Foreign Service Travel has been monumental. The Task Force has recently received additional staff assistance which made possible our accelerated progress, but there still remain enormous workloads to be met by the operating and reviewing officers in each agency, all of whom have heavy competing demands on their time.

2. Finance. The Task Force met with senior officers of the agencies in the finance area. It was the opinion of these officers that the development of substantial uniformity is an unrealistic task at the present time. The fiscal systems of each agency are intimately tailored to meet the varying program needs of the agency both for assuring proper control and obtaining information for management and reporting to the Bureau of the Budget and Congress. A further difficulty arises from the fact that the fiscal systems represent an integral process. Unlike the regulations in other areas, small segments cannot be isolated because they are so closely related to other parts of the process. The increasing use of ADP creates further rigidities and complications. The Task Force believes that despite these obstacles, significant uniformity might be achieved in many fiscal provisions, such as payrolling, vouchering and disbursing. It was decided to defer work on existing fiscal regulations as they do not affect personal entitlements, but every effort will be made to achieve uniformity when revisions are proposed and in the development of new forms and procedures.

3. Personnel. A meeting was also held with senior management officers in the field of Personnel. It was agreed that uniformity was a possible objective in many areas and work was initiated and carried forward. However, in the key areas of recruitment, training, assignment and promotion, the fluid state of the development of basic policies in the Department and for the foreign affairs agencies generally, preclude any effective work toward uniformity at the present time.

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4. Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities. The Task Force explored the problems in this area but took no action as the matter is being handled at higher levels.

5. Security. Work was initiated to develop uniform regulations in the area of physical security but was suspended due to the pressure of other work.

D. Prospects.

With the issuance of many uniform regulations and instructions, increasing attention must be devoted to maintaining uniformity. Instructions to this end were set forth in the uniform FAMC 163A; their enforcement will require close attention. In order to do this, one important measure is to stop using Circular Airgrams as a vehicle for changing regulations and procedures.

The Task Force is exploring other possible areas which affect personal entitlements and will initiate work in these where it appears fruitful. For the most part, however, our work must be devoted to achieving uniformity in regulations and procedures governing administrative operations. While these do not affect personal entitlements, existing differences create great problems for the CAMOs and increase the difficulty and cost of administrative support. These problems have been stressed in several CAMO reports and in the reports of the survey teams studying administrative support. In these areas it is not enough to identify and resolve differences in regulations and procedures; it will also require basic changes and reorganization of administrative operations both in Washington and the field. Furthermore, the job of achieving uniformity will become increasingly technical. It will be necessary for the Task Force to reorient its methods of operation with its committees and the operating offices concerned. The Task Force is exploring a few typical administrative areas in depth and will present its analysis and recommendations shortly.

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